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### RECREATION UPDATES

BRIDGEWATER UNITED SOCCER CLUB, formerly Bridgewater Recreation In-Town Soccer and Bridgewater EPIC Soccer, held their inaugural Opening Day Ceremonies on Saturday, September 13th. Currently there are 79 In-Town teams and 16 Travel teams. Don't forget to register for Spring Soccer at the end of November. Registration for soccer can be found on-line at [www.bridgewaterrec.com](http://www.bridgewaterrec.com).

Visit [www.bridgewaternj.gov](http://www.bridgewaternj.gov) to see what else Bridgewater Recreation has to offer, including the Youth Drop-In centers, the Volunteer Assistant Program, as well our partnership with Somerville for use of the skate park. To view registration forms for our various programs, click on the Recreation icon and then click on the registration forms link.

February begins Spring/Summer Registration so remember to check back then.



### SENIOR CITIZEN SERVICES

BRIDGEWATER HAS ANNOUNCED TWO NEW WEEKLY PROGRAMS FOR SENIOR CITIZENS: Sit and Energize (Fridays at 9:00 am) and Country Western Dance (Tuesdays at 6:30 pm). These complement the long list of existing senior programs already offered by the Township, including tap dancing, weight training, aerobics, tai chi, yoga, ballroom dance, mah jongg, knitting, computers, and Meals to Heal.

All programs are held at the Bridgewater Senior Citizen Center at 455 Somerville Road in Bridgewater. For more information on senior citizen activities, to register for a program, or to arrange a ride, call our senior citizen coordinator, Donna Langel, at (908) 575-8021 or email Donna at [seniors@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:seniors@bridgewaternj.gov).



### LEAF BAGS TO BE AVAILABLE OCTOBER 20

LEAF BAGS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PICK-UP by residents beginning Monday, October 20 between 8 am – 4 pm at the temporary Public Works facility located at 1450 Route 22 East. Township regulations require that leaves be bagged if they are to be picked up by the Township. It is not necessary to call Public Works to pick up your bags. The bags will be picked up starting the week of November 3rd and will continue to be picked up until April 3rd. Only leaves should be placed in the bags. Grass clippings, brush, and other materials will not be picked up. The yard waste site for collection of these materials will remain open until December 13, and will reopen on April 6, 2009. If you have any questions, please call Public Works at 732-469-0555 ext. 221 between 8 am – 4 pm.



# Bridgewater News

FALL 2008 • PUBLISHED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER

*Mayor*  
**PATRICIA FLANNERY**  
*Township Council*  
**HOWARD NORGALIS** *President*  
**BOB ALBABO**  
**MICHAEL HSING**  
**MATTHEW MOENCH**  
**PATRICK SCAGLIONE**

## A Message From The Mayor

**O**N ELECTION DAY, TUESDAY NOVEMBER 4TH, Bridgewater residents will share in the responsibility of deciding the next President of the United States. America sets the example for the world in believing that the worth of each individual member of our society is equal in deciding how and by whom we are governed. This system only works effectively when we each take the time to become informed about the candidates and the issues. In today's society with the many, many news broadcasts, print media, and websites available it seems that it would be easy to keep informed. For me, however, it has raised the importance of sifting through that information to determine its accuracy and true relevance. What may be one person's opinionated, emotional view of a candidate is not equal to an educated analysis of that candidate's qualifications, goals, and ability to take action. Taking the time to be an informed voter will keep America the ideal for the world.

In Bridgewater this year, we have no local elections as they are held every other year. However, we do have a ballot question affecting us. We, the voters, are being asked to change the parameters of the Open Space Fund to allow 25% to be used to implement capital projects to improve our open space. The Open Space Fund as currently configured allows the dollars to be spent to "acquire lands to be utilized for all categories of open space, including parks, recreation areas, natural areas, greenways, wildlife habitats, and other such uses consistent with open space." It is important to note that a YES vote on this referendum will not increase the tax dollars collected. On the contrary, open space improvements that would normally be funded with annual budget dollars would now be paid for by the Open Space Fund, if this referendum passes. It is also important to note that a significant balance will remain available for future open space purchases should any land opportunities present themselves. This is a win/win scenario as we will achieve greater use of our open space parcels without further taxes to pay for the improvements. Both the Open Space and Recreation committees have endorsed the proposal. Included in this newsletter is an FAQ sheet that will assist in your decision making.

The Police and Court functions of the municipal complex, which will be housed in the new portion of the building, are on schedule to be occupied by the end of this year. It is our expectation that we will have a ribbon cutting and tours of that portion of the facility the day of the Township reorganization meeting in January. The newly reenergized Creative Arts Committee is planning to have art work and entertainment present for the opening and to introduce you to their efforts in the community. As this will occur before the next newsletter comes out, please check the Township website for details of the open house if you would like to attend. If you sign up for the Township E-News, you will be directly notified by email. For privacy reasons the Township does not share the email list.

Please enjoy the wonderful holiday season ahead with your family and friends. And don't forget to vote on Tuesday, November 4th.

### YOUTH DROP-IN CENTERS TO FEATURE ARTS AND CRAFTS PROGRAM

**YOUTH DROP-IN CENTERS FOR STUDENTS in grades 6 - 12 are now open** on Friday evenings from 5:30-8:00 at Bradley Gardens School and on Sunday afternoons from 2:30-5:00 at Adamsville School. All Bridgewater-Raritan students are invited to attend free of charge. These drop-in centers feature an open gym for basketball and other games. New this year will be an **arts and crafts program** featuring popular activities like friendship bracelets and lanyard animals (key chains). **The arts and crafts program will begin the weekend of October 3.** Pizza and soda are served to all children who attend. Staffing is provided by the Bridgewater Recreation Department and Family and Community Services of Somerset County. Funding for these drop-in centers is provided by various grants that promote drug and alcohol free activities for youth. If you have any questions, call Bill Veliky at (908) 725-6300 ext. 235 or email Bill at [grants@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:grants@bridgewaternj.gov).

## Engineering News

THE ENGINEERING AND PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENTS have begun their evaluations of road and drainage projects to be used in the preparation of recommendations for 2009 capital projects. As in past years, the projects are evaluated and ranked based on a criteria which includes physical condition (degree of deterioration), safety issues, and degree of use / extent of impact on the public. Projects are ranked against all other projects in need of work in the Township. Those projects receiving the highest ranking are recommended for funding. There are always more projects needing capital funds than can be accommodated in any one calendar year. The recommendations are forwarded by the Administration to the Township Council for their consideration in early 2009. If you are concerned about a particular road or drainage issue, please contact the engineering department at 908-725-6300 ext. 221 or at [engineering@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:engineering@bridgewaternj.gov).

### E-NEWS

IF YOU WANT TO RECEIVE FUTURE COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER and other relevant news items by email, please forward your name, address, and email address to [newsletter@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:newsletter@bridgewaternj.gov).

## Watch for Deer

DEER ARE EVERYWHERE. There are more than 15,000 deer-vehicle crashes in New Jersey each year. A deer crash can happen anytime but half occur from October through December, and three quarters happen from dusk to dawn. Deer crashes can occur almost anywhere, with many occurring on two-lane roads with no median. Every year, deer crashes in New Jersey cause millions of dollars in vehicle damage, injuries, and even deaths. It is time to **REDUCE YOUR RISK**.

- **Slow down** – if you see one deer, more may follow.
- **Don't swerve** – if a crash is unavoidable, break firmly and stay in your lane.
- **Keep headlights clean and aligned** – use high beams when possible.
- **Always buckle up** – it could save your life.

For more information on deer-vehicle crash concerns, enter the North Jersey Deer Vehicle Crash Coalition website at [www.njdeercrash.org](http://www.njdeercrash.org). For more information on wildlife, view the Township's website at [www.bridgewaternj.gov](http://www.bridgewaternj.gov) (Department of Human Services, Division of Health).

## Animal Safety



WILD ANIMALS that you see in and around your yard, particularly raccoons, foxes, skunks, groundhogs and bats, may carry rabies. Animals with rabies do not always display signs of illness and can be perfectly healthy in appearance. In the event that a wild animal or a stray domestic animal enters your home, you may contact the Somerset Regional Animal Shelter during regular hours of operation at (908) 725-0308 for assistance. In the evening or on weekends you may contact the Police Department at (908) 722-4111.

Remember to enjoy wildlife from a distance. Avoid all direct contact with wild animals, particularly those that exhibit symptoms of injury or illness. All bites and scratches from wild or domestic animals should be washed immediately with soap and warm water and receive prompt medical attention. Report all bites, scratches, and exposures to the Health Department at (908) 725-6300 extension 259.

For further information on wild animals or rabies exposure, contact the Health Department at the above telephone number or through email at [health@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:health@bridgewaternj.gov).



## Holiday Shopping Safety Tips

RECENTLY TWO ROBBERIES OCCURRED at the Bridgewater Commons Mall, one involving a 17-year-old female being physically assaulted while walking to her vehicle parked in an exterior lot. The second robbery occurred inside the Mall. In these two cases all of the suspects were apprehended. These crimes emphasize the fact that violent crimes can occur even in somewhat well populated areas where other people are present. Though no one safety tip can keep you from being victimized, every citizen, whenever out in public, should be mindful of these safety reminders:

- Whenever possible, park your vehicle in a well lit area. If you are unable to do so, have someone you know walk you back to your vehicle. If the place you are leaving has security, have one of the officers walk you to your vehicle.
- When out shopping take only the money and credit cards you will need.
- Be aware and pay attention to your surroundings. If you are ever approached for your wallet or purse, do not refuse to hand it over. Possessions can be replaced!
- Avoid cell phone and Ipod use while walking through the parking lots. These tips are not to scare but to inform you. Do not give criminals the opportunity.

## Drinking Water Quality

THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (NJDEP) has recently reported that approximately one in eight private wells exhibit some form of contamination. Although contamination may be related to synthetic chemicals or naturally occurring metals, the presence of coliform bacteria is often referenced as being the most common problem for residential well owners. Left unchecked, bacterial contamination has the potential to cause gastrointestinal illness.

The Bridgewater Health Department is equipped to provide New Jersey-certified bacteriological water testing services. Sterile containers for the test are available at the Health Department. The test costs \$7.00 for Bridgewater residents and \$10.00 for businesses and non-residents. In most cases, accurate results can be provided within 24 hours of sample collection. The NJDEP recommends that homeowners that utilize individual wells for a primary water source check the bacteriological quality of the water at least once a year.

Additional water quality tests are also available for Township residents upon request. The volatile organic chemical scan is suggested for residents that may have concerns about chemicals in their well water. The test can detect 60 different chemical contaminants. The cost of the chemical scan is \$100.00. Samples can also be collected for the detection of lead, arsenic, and nitrates, as well as other naturally occurring contaminants of concern.

To request further information on water quality issues, or to arrange for testing, please contact the Health Department at 908-725-5750 or at [health@bridgewaternj.gov](mailto:health@bridgewaternj.gov).

## Congratulations ECO Award Winners



ON JUNE 12, 2008 MAYOR PATRICIA FLANNERY and members of the Environmental Commission presented awards to the winning participants in Bridgewater's first annual School Litter Reduction and Recycling Challenge. The contest was announced this last Earth Day and made available to all students in the Bridgewater-Raritan School District. Contestants from Hamilton and Adamsville primary schools and Bridgewater Baseball were each awarded \$1,500 in grant funds to see their environmental projects come to life.

Dawn Eisele and Patricia Pillon of Hamilton School will oversee their fourth grade students in creating Bridgewater's first "Litter Free School Zone." Adamsville School and their second grade class, led by teacher Cathy Pavlovski, will be implementing a comprehensive environmental enrichment program. And lastly, Brandon T. Myers of Bradley Gardens School and his teammates from the Bridgewater Baseball program look to "Green" the baseball diamonds at the Prince Rodgers Baseball Complex.

We at Bridgewater Township are proud of our young contributors and very impressed by the amount of passion and creativity they have shown. We look forward to displaying their results and announcing next year's winners on Earth Day 2009.

## ZONING PERMITS

THIS IS A QUICK REMINDER that construction of all fences, sheds, patios, retaining walls and gazebos require a permit from the zoning officer. No permit is needed for landscaping or paving a driveway. Permit applications may be obtained on the second floor of the municipal building in the zoning office. If you have questions as to the location of these structures, please call the zoning officer, George Jones, at 908-725-6300 ext. 240, or visit the Township website at [www.bridgewaternj.gov](http://www.bridgewaternj.gov).

## Shade Tree Board

HAVE YOU SEEN hyphantria cunea? You probably have. It is the silken tent at the end of tree branches that indicates the presence of webworms, which are plentiful this fall. Webworms are a common American insect pest and have been known to feed on almost 90 species of trees in the U.S. that include elm, hickory, fruit, and some maples.

The webworm, which occurs in late summer and fall, does little damage to the host tree. The caterpillar stays inside the tent to feed on the leaves. When the leaves are gone, the webworms will move to the tips of the branches causing defoliation. An early winter dormancy helps to control this risk, as does pruning back the encased branch tip from the tree and composting or chipping the branch and tent.

Webworms should not be confused with tent caterpillars, which appear in the spring and usually cause more damage than webworms. These pests feed at the forks of main branches. Persistent infestations can cause limbs to die and reduce fruit production.

A diversity of tree ages and species can help reduce the risk of pest outbreaks, as will spacing your trees far enough apart so they do not have to compete for light, water, and nutrients. Failure to follow these guidelines will increase stress on the trees, making them more vulnerable to pest attacks.



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# **BRIDGEWATER OPEN SPACE REFERENDUM FAQ**

Bridgewater Township is seeking voter approval for the use of 25% of the Open Space Trust Fund to be used to improve open space properties for active and passive recreation.

## **WHY IS THIS REFERENDUM NECESSARY?**

Bridgewater has quite simply grown beyond the capacity of the recreation facilities at our disposal. The problem is not going away on its own. It is incumbent upon us to come up with ways to increase both the inventory and the efficiency/ utilization of our facilities in the face of this higher demand, but to do so in a way that does not involve the use of additional taxpayer funds.

## **WILL MY TAXES INCREASE?**

No. The money that is proposed for open space improvement has already been collected, and has been accumulating in the Open Space Trust Fund since 1999.

## **IS THIS A LEGAL USE OF THE OPEN SPACE FUNDS?**

Yes. Improving Township land with up to 25% of open space funds is entirely legal, but requires voter approval.

Per our adopted ordinance, "The land acquired under the Open Space Trust Fund shall be utilized for all categories of open space, including parks, recreation areas, natural areas, greenways, wildlife habitats and such other uses consistent with the concept of open space."

## **WHY HASN'T ALL THE MONEY IN THE FUND ALREADY BEEN SPENT TO ACQUIRE OPEN SPACE? ISN'T THAT WHAT WE VOTED FOR IN THE FIRST PLACE?**

Bridgewater has already purchased 212 acres of open space. The Open Space Committee is constantly seeking additional land that can be purchased at good value to provide more open space for active and passive recreation as well as for the purposes of keeping the town green. Based on the limited amount of remaining property available, suitable parcels are becoming increasingly difficult to find.

## **CAN WE INCREASE OUR USE OF COUNTY OR BOARD OF ED PROPERTIES?**

We have tried many creative methods to maximize the use of the existing lands such as partnerships with the Schools and County to share their fields when not in use, and partnerships with National Starch and SJP Properties to use space on their corporate lawn for additional ball fields. (Note: While this has been a beneficial partnership for the Township, the recent sale of National Starch to an outside entity does not guarantee its renewal.)

## **WHEN I DRIVE PAST THE FIELDS, THEY ARE FREQUENTLY EMPTY. CAN'T WE JUST USE THEM MORE?**

If you observe fields empty, it is undoubtedly for a good reason, the most likely being the time of day or the time of year. For example, during the spring and fall, most of our fields are in constant use from 5:00 pm until dark (and beyond) during the week, and most of the day on the weekends. Furthermore, a natural grass field can only take so much use before it wears out. Fields also need to be rested. Our neighbor, Bernards Township, regularly rotates fields out of service for a season at a time, and as a result their multi-purpose fields are in better condition. The demand in Bridgewater is so high that proper field rest has been impossible.

## **WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF 25% - IF IT IS SO COMPELLING, WHY NOT MORE?**

First, the law only permits up to 25% to be used. Second, this still leaves a very large amount that can still be used for acquisition.

## **WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN WITH THESE FUNDS?**

The specific mix of funds for various types of recreational facilities – active/passive – has not been determined. The Recreation and Park boards and Mayor and Township Council will be evaluating a broad range of improvements. However, the improvements will not cost the taxpayers any additional money – they will be paid for entirely from the moneys already collected.

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**PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOTE ON NOVEMBER 4, 2008**

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